

IMPORTANT FROM MEXICO.

The following detailed account of the expedition to Tehuacan, and of the narrow escape of Gen. Santa Anna, which have hitherto been shadowed forth in a somewhat condensed form, will be found of the greatest interest at the present time. No events that have transpired since the accounts reached us of the noble exploits achieved in the basin of Mexico have, we think, been recorded with so graphic a force and vigorous a pen.—Union.

From the New Orleans Picayune, Feb. 15.

Mexico.

Expedition against Tehuacan.—Narrow escape of Santa Anna.—Occupation of Orizaba by American troops.—Establishment of an American government in Orizaba.—Description of the country.—The steamship New Orleans, which arrived on Saturday last, we received from Mexico a voluminous correspondence and full files of papers. Having already communicated the great event reported by this arrival the negotiation of the terms of an agreement by which an end is to be put to the war—we now proceed to bring up the details of other intelligence received by the same conveyance. The expedition against Tehuacan, which was reported to have been the last of the great battles of the valley of Mexico, we have had nothing more graphic than the following long letter of our special correspondent, giving an account of a secret expedition against Tehuacan and Orizaba. It is due to our correspondent, whose letters for several weeks often reach us in a single package, to say, that a letter before, written just before he started off with Gen. Lane's expedition, was despatched before the treaty, or project of a treaty, was signed. His speculations as to the ability of the Mexican government to enforce any treaty will possess their proper weight, even now. * * * With these prefatory remarks, we have our correspondent to speak for himself, adding the letter which other items from the papers as we find of interest.

[Special Correspondence of the N. O. Picayune.] Though the following letter of our correspondent is not of the latest date, his speculations we deem well worthy of attention:

CITY OF MEXICO, January 17, 1848.

I perceive by the papers which have been received here, that the policy to be pursued in the further prosecution of the war, or in the demands to be made of the enemy in case of negotiation, have become the leading topic before Congress and throughout the country. Some of the leading statesmen have frankly avowed their views, and others, it is said, were about to define their positions. Without doubt, a crisis in the war has arrived, when it is necessary to determine upon the occupation of the country, or to draw an indemnifying line; for if the war is prosecuted with the view of obtaining a peace from the shadow of a government at Queretaro, or from a government which may be assembled under the auspices of American arms, the army must remain in the country to secure the fulfillment of the treaty, which would involve us in all the expenses of occupation without its benefits, and would, by the high taxes, and burdensome exactions, which alone can force a peace, exasperate the population, and create a bitterness is notorious, and create an animosity between the two races, which must, if occupation is forced upon us—and to my mind it appears clear, the perversion of the Mexican leaders, political and military, will force that policy upon us—make Mexico to us what Ireland is to England—perpetually alien in language, in manners, in customs, and in feeling. It is clear that the absence of a fixed and tangible object in the prosecution of the war, and the hope inspired by each successive victory of a speedy peace, has despoiled us of the legitimate fruits of those victories. After the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, Ampudia should never have been allowed to gather his army for the defence of Monterrey. Santa Anna would not have been able to move his army at San Luis Potosi, but the onward movement should have been so rapid and decisive, that the capital would be in our hands in three months from the opening of the war. The same hope of coaxing a peace has proved equally vain during the operations on this line, and still there is no sign that experience has taught wisdom. After the splendid victory obtained in this valley, the army has been four months here without making a movement upon the remaining strongholds of the enemy, and he has had ample time to forget his defeats; and if we are to credit his proclamations, he is again about to prepare for organized resistance. Intelligence has been received here, that San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas, in Guadalajara, and in Guzman, the legislative assembly, and the people have declared in favor of continuing the war, and an opposition to peace. They declare that, in the absence of a government of national organization, they will band themselves together in support of these principles; will appoint two persons from each State, whose duty it shall be to elect an executive and legislative body, and to raise the army, and to use all the power to raise their supplies. It is true that Mexican action has generally been shortcoming of their various declarations; but it is equally true that we have too often relied upon these shortcomings. This proclamation is said to have been effected by a union of the Puros and Santa Annaists, with the object, it is contended, of embarrassing, if not destroying, the government, and of placing the country in a position that would enable them to drive the invaders from the country, and to re-establish the military fame which his whole successful career, Santa Anna, has, he says, by his treachery and cowardice, lost to the republic. Almost simultaneously with this document, the address or message of Pina y Land—upon whom, as Chief Justice, the duties of President of the republic have devolved—appears. He calmly and candidly exposes the evils the country is suffering from the war, and evidently has no hope of success from its further prosecution. Yet he does not commit himself for peace. But even if he is in favor of it, he is too feeble a man in popularity. And the probability is now that a quarrel of the government and the army will ensue; so that, could a peace be made with him, it would not, as I have already said, be firm or lasting.

It is, perhaps, a weakness inseparable from our form of government, that an invasive war cannot be prosecuted with that energy and decision of purpose which mark the military operations of a monarchy or despotism; still, it is a certain system of rearing the army in a disorganized system, and of placing it with the great numerical inferiority of our army compared with those of the enemy, has constantly led him to hope for ultimate success—and should be avoided. Here there is not a sufficient force now fit for duty, and sufficiently disciplined, which can be sent to any enterprise of moment, although it is far from impossible that the city of Mexico will appear strange, perhaps, to some, who set down that under the commands of Generals Butler, Patterson, and Lane, about six or seven thousand men have arrived; but it must be considered that above half of it is number are in hospital, and that the remainder, being new levies and volunteers, have not yet arrived at the necessary state of discipline. Meanwhile, the moral effect of the capture of the capital is being wasted, the enemy, if he is so disposed, is being allowed time to organize new armies; and, it must be confessed, his disposition to do so is strengthened much by the sentiments expressed by some of our most prominent statesmen who aspire to the presidency. If it is determined that the chief cities of Mexico shall all be taken, leaving out of view the possibility of resistance by a part of the whole yet possessed by the enemy, it is estimated by intelligent military men that the additional force of regulars and volunteers—the former of which the Secretary of War recommends shall be raised, and the latter of which he suggests the President shall be empowered to call out, but with the prospect barely possible of their being needed—will be insufficient to garrison those cities and keep open communication. The administration, in this respect, is doubtless prompted by a spirit of economy; but the system, as has already been proved, is one that, in the end, is far more costly than sending into the country at once a force capable of following up successes with vigor, and of meeting all emergencies.

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valley of Mexico in quest of guerrillas; and after giving it a thorough search, to march in the direction of Santa Anna's residence for the time being. The expedition, consisting of two companies of the 3d dragoons, under the command of Capt. Dupont and Lieut. Adde and Martin; a company of mounted rifles, commanded by Lieut. Claiborne; and four companies of Texas rangers, commanded by Captains Roberts and Daggitt and Lieutenants Tucker and Evans—numbering in all about 350 officers and men—left Mexico on the morning of the 18th, taking the route via Vera Cruz road; Major Polk in chief command of the dragoons and rifles, and Col. Hays in chief command of the rangers, accompanied the expedition, together with Major Chevalier, formerly of the rangers, Captain Crittenden of the rifles, and Lieutenants Butler, Dr. Hunt, of Kentucky, and Mr. Rietzler, of Indiana—the former aid, and the two latter volunteer aids of General Butler, who followed the expedition as volunteers. We arrived at the

Vista del Chaco about four o'clock in the morning, after a fatiguing march of near thirty miles under a hot sun, and over a road covered with dust. The next morning, crossing the mountains enclosing the valley, we reached Rio Frio about nine o'clock, when the expedition was halted, and the belief that the guerrillas were to be found between the Rio Frio and Santa Anna, was confirmed. Between Rio Frio and Santa Anna we met General Marshall, with the advance of his train. Some of his officers, in command of the rear guard, reported that about two hundred guerrillas had been following them and threatening an attack the whole morning. Turning from the road at the point where the guerrillas were reported to be, we went on to Santa Anna, and there the whole command was quartered for the night. From Santa Anna, we proceeded in the direction of Puebla, and in a few minutes we were halted, and the rangers galloped ahead towards the plaza with their six-shooters cocked, glancing an eye on every side, with the belief—and I think I may say the hope—that the enemy was on the loose-tops. The rangers in the plaza, in a moment's space, were all falling through the air, and were reported to be killed and in a few minutes we had the mortification to learn that the great object of our search had fled two hours before we arrived, and had taken the road to Orizaba, with an escort of seventy-five mounted men. The national flags hung out from the residences of foreigners, and white flags suspended from the houses of the Mexicans in every direction, which was a sign that the Mexicans were in advance; and it was with eagerness it was learned that the Mexican, whose coach and escort was stopped shortly after leaving the hacienda, sent by a short route across the mountains one of his servants to communicate to Santa Anna that American troops were on the road, and as he believed, with the intention of capturing him. Had it not been for this treachery on the part of a man travelling under American safeguards, the surprise would have been complete. The guide—a Mexican, whose fidelity had been proved—after meeting the carriage, was constantly urging the General to press the command forward with greater rapidity; but this could not be done without risking the loss of the men and horses, who were now fatigued—a weighty consideration, in the position he was then in. It was suggested, on arriving in town and finding Santa Anna had fled, to press fifty or a hundred fresh horses, and pursue him as long as there was a prospect of finding him. But the General wisely argued that the bird was alarmed; and to pursue him through a country unknown to the troops, and where the guerrillas were known to be in the neighborhood, was a weighty consideration, and with the probability, too, that the enemy's forces might accumulate on the road to a number dangerous to so small a body as could be mounted, would be seeking danger, with scarcely a possibility of success in the end.

The first feeling of disappointment having in a great measure passed off, the buildings and suspiciously were searched, and a man was found, who was a messenger to find in the quarters, so recently occupied by Santa Anna, a part of his military wardrobe, two of his costly canes, his field glass, and three trunks containing his lady's clothing. This, at all events, to show the chase was hot and the departure hasty. His military property was taken as a penalty for the treachery of the guide. His wife's clothing was turned over to the alcalde, and his receipt was taken for them, and a letter addressed him by his illustrious husband, by the lady, informed him of the disposition made of the trunks, and expressed regret at his absence on the occasion of our appearing in his quarters. It may seem trifling to descend to such minutiae, but the citizens, desirous of avoiding those excesses which always will take place after a successful assault, wisely cleared the rascals out early in the morning.

On January 20, 1848, we were now quietly and comfortably quartered here, and the inhabitants seem thus far to be satisfied with our presence. The General has appointed Major Polk, military and civil governor of the city; Col. Dumont, attorney general; and Col. Hays, commander of troops. Inquiries are about being instituted in relation to certain matters of importance, the nature of which will be revealed by the orders I enclose. As soon as these inquiries are concluded, you will be informed of the result. You will also find a correspondence between the Ayuntamiento of Cordova and the General, requesting him to occupy their city. The people in this part of the country are generally peaceable, and all that was wanting to put down the guerrillas who have rendezvoused in the neighborhood, was the presence of sufficient force to counteract them, and support the well disposed. The good conduct of the troops on the march, and since their arrival here, has assisted much in conciliating the people, and the durability of first impressions is proverbial. Col. Bankhead, we learn, is on his way here with 1,000 or 1,200 men and several pieces of artillery, and is expected to arrive at Cordova on the 25th. If he does, he will be in a position to occupy the city. This amount of well-conducted troops in and about here will be of great service in protecting life and property from guerrilla depredations, and in encouraging our friends to speak their sentiments boldly, be they what they may, for peace or for occupation. We shall remain here until Col. Bankhead arrives; how much longer, I do not know. From the reliable reports of the General, we will take the direct road to Puebla, and thence as rapidly as possible to Mexico, where it is expected the San Luis expedition will be preparing about the time we arrive. Should Rea or any of the guerrilla parties be on the road, you may depend they will not be allowed much rest.

We will conclude this letter by giving you a copy of a memorandum furnished by a friend in Puebla, in relation to the character and disposition of the people in the towns and villages we have passed through from Puebla to this place, and in like places on the direct road from Puebla to Orizaba. D. S.

On the road to Orizaba, via Tehuacan. AMATEPEC.—Without troops, but the quarters of a band of robbers or guerrillas, which are daily robbing near the gates of Puebla. TEPECAC.—Without troops. This town sent a commission of the municipality to the governor some time since, to obtain permission to arm fifty men as a police to guard against the guerrillas, which has been granted. They are armed with shotguns, and are American protection; and, besides, safeguards are in possession of a few of the inhabitants, a majority of whom are favorable to the United States, but are not strong enough to manifest their opposition openly to the guerrilla parties. The sub-prefect of this town is opposed to the municipality, and is hostile to American troops. TEACOTEPEC.—(ten leagues this side of Tehuacan.)—This place is famous as being a village of robbers. TEHUACAN.—There may be, although it is not probable, a few hundred troops here, in consequence of the late proclamation in favor of a Spanish prince; and Santa Anna is still the highest authority in the valley. There are many roads leading to and from Tehuacan—some to this city, (Puebla) one to Orizaba, and the third to Orizaba. Robbers are scarcely ever found on the Orizaba road; but if they should, by any chance, get on it, they are pursued by the Indians and exterminated. This will be most likely the road by which any force or communication of troops would be sent to Orizaba. The inhabitants of Tehuacan are peaceable, and nothing is known of their being ill-disposed.

PUNTE COLORADO.—Half way to Orizaba from Tehuacan, where the mountains begin. No village; nothing but a bridge and a small house; but this point has always been a rendezvous for robbers, and they are now going about in the Orizaba road, and have been seen on the road from Puebla to Tehuacan. The main road from Puebla to Orizaba is as follows: AMATEPEC.—Without troops, but a great number of robbers are living here. AGATEPEC.—Without troops, but a most famous place for robbers, who are on the Orizaba road, and have neglected to leave the Orizaba road, and are now making a detour to Vera Cruz. It is reported that their number amounts to three hundred. PUNTE COLORADO.—Half way to Orizaba from Tehuacan, where the mountains begin. No village; nothing but a bridge and a small house; but this point has always been a rendezvous for robbers, and they are now going about in the Orizaba road, and have been seen on the road from Puebla to Tehuacan. 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